



Proclamation

Bombay. By Virtue of a Proclamation directed to wit. I hereby proclaim and give notice, that a Session of Oyer and Terminer and General Goal Delivery will be held before Sir ALEXANDER ANSTROTHER, Recorder, Recorder and his Associates, Judges at the Court of the Recorder of Bombay, at the Court House in Bombay, on Monday the fourteenth day of July next, at Eleven o'clock, in the forenoon, for the Trial of all Treasons, Murders, Felonies, and other Crimes and Misdemeanors, had, done, or committed within the Town and Island of Bombay, and the Limits thereof, and the Places & Factories subordinate thereto, and dependent thereon; and also to enquire, hear and determine in like manner, all Treasons, Murders, Felonies, Forgeries, Perjuries, Crimes, Extortions, Misdemeanors, Trespasses, Wrongs and Oppressions had, done, and committed, by any of his Majesty's British subjects, in any of the Territories which now are subject to, or dependent upon the said Government of Bombay, or within any of the Dominions of the native Princes of India in alliance with the said Government.

And also, that at the same time and place, will be holden a Session of Admiralty for the Trial of all Treasons, Murders, Piracies, Robberies, Trespasses, Misdemeanors, and other crimes and offences, had, done, perpetrated, or committed on the High Seas.

And I hereby require and enjoin all persons bound to prosecute and give evidence at the above Sessions, or in any way concerned therein, to attend at the time and place, above mentioned, and not to depart without leave of the Court.—Dated this 2d day of July, 1817.

O. WOODHOUSE,
SHERIFF.

Advertisement.

In the Matter of the Will of ROBERT BENJAMIN PERRIN, ESQ. Doctor of Medicine and Surgeon in the Honorable East India Company's Service, deceased.

PROBATE of the last Will and Testament of the deceased having been granted by the Honorable the Court of the Recorder in its Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, to JOHN STEWART of Bombay Esquire one of the Executors named in the said will, all persons concerned therein are hereby apprized thereof.—Dated June 27th, 1817.

GRANT,
PROCTOR.

Advertisement.

PURSUANT to a Decree, bearing date the thirtieth day of November 1816, made by Sir WILLIAM GRANT Kt. Master of the Rolls of that part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland called England, made in a certain cause depending in the High Court of Chancery wherein ROBERT BRISCOE PERRIN and others are the Plaintiffs and WILLIAM COWPER and others are the Defendants,

The Creditors and Legatees (who have not already been paid their Debts and Legacies) of WILLIAM SMITH, late a Lieutenant Colonel in the Service of the Honorable the East India Company on the Bombay Establishment (who died at Bombay in or about the month of February 1816), are on or before the First day of January 1818 to come in and prove their Debts and claim their Legacies before Sir JOHN SIMON BARONET, one of the Masters of the said High Court of Chancery in England, at his Chambers in Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London, or in default thereof such Creditors and Legatees will be pre-emptorily excluded the benefit of the said Decree.

13th December, 1817.

WHEREAS by an order of the High Court of Chancery made in a Cause "GIST against FOWKE," it was amongst other things ordered that it should be referred to JAMES STEPHEN Esquire, one of the Masters of the said Court, to inquire and state whether JAMES GIST named in the will of SAMUEL GIST deceased, the Testator in the said order named, be living or dead, and if dead, whether he left any Issue Male, lawfully begotten, and born of an European woman, or whether he left any child or children living at the time of the death of the said Testator: The said JAMES GIST, (who went upwards of 40 years ago to India as a private Soldier in the Honorable East India Company's Service and passed as it is supposed under the name of GUEST) if living, is forthwith to come in before the said Master at his Chambers in Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London, and prove his Identity, and if the said JAMES GIST be dead the Issue Male of the said JAMES GIST, lawfully begotten and born of an European woman, and also the child or children of the said JAMES GIST, living at the time of the death of the said Testator SAMUEL GIST, (who died on or about the 16th day of January 1815) are or is forthwith to come in before the said Master at his said Chambers and prove his, her or their Identity and relation hip as aforesaid, to the said JAMES GIST, and any person who can give information respecting the said JAMES GIST, or his child or children are requested forthwith to give such information to the said Master at his Chambers aforesaid.

Any Person desiring further information or having any to communicate, on the subject of the above Advertisement, are referred to Messrs. JOHN LECKIE & CO.

Bombay, 18th June, 1817

For Sale

IN
MILITARY STREET,

THE BEST

Jamaica Rum

10 YEARS OLD,

IMPORTED IN THE SHIP

ZEPHYR,

14 Rupees per Dozen.

Bombay, 2d July, 1817.

A CARD.

MR. GRAHAM, Artist, a pupil of Mr. FUSELI, Keeper of the Royal Academy, and of Mr. ROBERTSON Miniature Painter to His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, has the honor to announce, that he has taken the house formerly occupied by Mr. NASH in FORBES STREET, where he begs to offer his Services to his Friends and the Public, either as a Portrait and Miniature Painter, or in any of the higher branches of the Art, on moderate terms.

Bombay, 2d July, 1817.

NAUTICAL CHRONICLE & NAVAL REPORT.

SAILED.—June 29th, Ship Wyton, Free Trader, Captain John M. Ardlick, to Madras and Calcutta. 30, The H. C.'s Ship Bombay, Captain A. Hamilton, to China. Passenger—Dent, Esq.—Ship Charles Grant, Captain Hugh Scott, to China. Passengers, Miss Duff, Miss M. Duff, Miss S. Canter, Mr. A. Canter.

DEATH.—Early in the morning of Monday last, Edward Hood, infant son of E. Tadman Esq.

TO A CORRESPONDENT.

The Epigram sent us shall appear in our next.

The Gazette.

WEDNESDAY, 2d JULY, 1817.

After perusing, with the utmost attention, the late highly important intelligence from Europe, we feel unequal to determine, with any sort of satisfaction to ourselves, whether the Ministers of the Crown have, in their late measures, acted wisely or otherwise, for when we consider how many men of experience, talents, and integrity, are to be found as well for, as against, those measures, we do not feel sufficient confidence in our own judgement to venture any opinion upon the subject.

That the state is diseased, to a degree, never known before, is unfortunately but too true, and how recovery is to be effected is a question, relative to which the best and wisest of our countrymen may fairly and honorably differ. We cannot, however, help acknowledging our belief, that if Ministers exercise the increase of power, recently entrusted to them, with moderation and wisdom, and evince a sincere disposition towards reform and retrenchment, all will yet go well, but, if they do not, then we shall speedily expect the most lamentable results.

The funds, as we before stated, have rapidly risen. The utter impossibility of employing money in trade, with either safety or advantage, and the knowledge that no public loan was contemplated, have, it is said, greatly contributed to produce this effect.

The Committee of Finance have resolved to advise the abolition, after the death of the present possessors, of the following places, Governorship of the Isle of Wight, Clerkship of the Pells, Two Chief Justiceships in Eyre, Auditorship and four Tellerships of the Exchequer and Wardenship of the Cinque Ports.

An ordinance of the French King having directed, that the facts imputed to Lieut. Gen. Decaen, and made the foundation of a criminal prosecution against him, should be comprized in the amnesty, the prosecution has been discontinued and the Lieut. Gen. restored to liberty.

The present Duke of Marlborough has succeeded his father, after a slight contest, with J. A. Wright Esq. as High Steward of Oxford.

Sir Watkin Wynne was married on the 4th of February, to Lady H. Clive. The Marquis of Hertford appears to have been dangerously ill in the beginning of March.

The Prince Regent's late disorder was spasmodic. His Royal Highness is stated to have been bled four times during its continuance.

The Duke of Devonshire, according to private report, has accepted an invitation

of the Grand Duke Nicholas to accompany him on his return to Russia.

If we are to believe the *Sun*, Cobbet is under prosecution for a libel in one of his late publications.

It was understood that the trials of Preston and others accused of High Treason would not take place 'til the next session, when another special commission would be appointed.

Part of the 6000 British troops which were to return home from India, were fully expected to embark from Calcutta on or about the 26th of February, & had, therefore, probably arrived in England before the Bombay Merchant sailed.

The two Irish Lords of the Treasury that are added to the English Treasury are Colonels Odell and Barry.

English Extracts.

"The Noble Viscount (Sidmouth) has said, that Ireland was now perfectly quiet. It might be so; but he remembered the answer which a facetious person he had heard of, always gave upon his arrival in London, when asked respecting the tranquillity of Ireland. 'Oyes said he "they are as quiet as gunpowder." Such he apprehended, was the present quiet state of that country; seditious practices evidently prevailed, yet he was not satisfied they existed in that shape, form and character which justified the suspension of the Habeas Corpus.—(Extract from Marquis Wellesley's speech, February 24th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.—Wednesday Feb. 25.

SUSPENSION OF THE HABEAS CORPUS ACT.

Mr. Sheriff Bridges presented a petition from the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council of the city of London, deprecating the intended suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. On the motion that it should lie on the table.

Sir W. Curtis would not oppose the petition lying on the table, but he disagreed with every word contained in it.

Sir J. Shaw thought the language of the petition moderate, and deserving the utmost attention.

Mr. W. Smith was not clear that there was sufficient cause for the bill against seditious meetings; that he was surprised to hear an hon. alderman (Sir W. Curtis) say, that he disagreed with every word of the petition. He trusted he had stated the hon. alderman's words rightly.

Sir W. Curtis.—Perfectly right, (a laugh.) Mr. W. Smith was sorry that he was so; for he hoped to have held out an opportunity of explanation.

The order of the day being moved by Lord Castlereagh for the first reading of the Habeas Corpus suspension bill.

The Hon. Mr. Brough would oppose in every stage this arbitrary, impolitic, and uncalled-for measure. He would not discredit the report, nor the members who composed the committee from which it originated, although he was surprised that his right hon. friend (Mr. Ponsonby) should have disgraced himself by accepting of a place in it, and sitting in the same chamber with the noble lord opposite. (Sighs of wear.) Could his right hon. friend think himself in safety with the noble lord? He was free to say, that had he (Mr. B.) been nominated a member of that committee, no independent man would have led him to risk his character by acting with the noble lord. (hear.) A report was drawn up by a secret committee in 1812, that contained charges against individuals. When its allegations, however, came to be examined on oath, nine-tenths of them were found to be false. If the evidence taken before former committees of the house on these recent occasions had turned out so completely unfounded, what security had we that the allegations on which we were now called to legislate, on which we were required to sacrifice the rights of the people, and strip them of the benefits of the constitution, were founded in truth? The design (says the report) was by a sudden rising in the dead of night, to surprise and overpower the soldiers in the different barracks, which were to be set on fire, to possess themselves of the artillery, to seize or destroy the bridges, and to take possession of the Tower and the Bank. How was this mighty project to be accomplished? Could they suppose that they could overpower a garrison without spreading an alarm in a case where a single watchman would not be surprised? He was willing to admit that some wild, mad, desperate and mischievous enthusiasts might discuss the probability of success attending such enterprises in a delirious way; that they might, in their ignorant and intoxicated imaginations, start such absurd ideas; but could there be any danger from such instruments? It seemed that their next attempt would have been to blow up the bridges. How was this to be done? What preparations were made for the mighty undertaking? Why, we found six men in a waggon, having an old stocking, in which there was a little powder, (laughter.) This pompous display of burlesque design in the means of execution, put him in mind of a performance which perhaps the right hon. gent. opposite (Mr. Canning) would remember

better than he; he meant the drama of the Abbey of Quiddenburg, (a laugh.) To describe this enterprise in the style of that performance, there would be—scene, Spaffields—time, morning—enter waggon, with six men and the ammunition, stockings, (laughter.) They must proceed to blow up the bridges, without sappers or miners; they must take the Bank, defended by its guard; they must advance to summon the Tower, defended with artillery, and manœuvred with soldiers; they must overcome all opposition, and take possession of the town. He believed firmly, that the account given of the pike was a true one—that they were fabricated, not to attack the citizens of London—not for the purpose of rebellion and insurrection, but to defend a pond against desecration. He lent a mere credence to this story, because he remembered, that in 1794 there was some noise about eight fathoms, and one pike in Tooley street in the Borough. (laughter.) Then came the mighty subscription, which was to support, encourage and invigorate this dangerous conspiracy; it amounted to no less an extent than £100,000. (laughter.) He supposed, as they were to burn the barracks, they had previously shamed! shame! to those who could produce this absurdity to Parliament, and on the ground of its importance call upon us for a surrender of our liberties. He charged the report with a gross falsehood. Was the house to resort to this same art, to get quit of its errors, as another house (order) Was it to say that a word was by whole word left out, as suited its purpose? The whole people were in this report libelled and arraigned; they were traduced in their characters, and were to surrender their freedom by such trash as this—trash, which I only think fit for tramping under my feet. Yet upon vague and unfounded allegations, the invasion of the constitution was justified, and measures were to be passed, by which I, (said he) may be apprehended and imprisoned to-morrow, by the command, and during the pleasure of the noble lord; who declares, that I and my friends are responsible to God and man for the empowerment we give to any plan for reducing his power or supporting the liberties of the people. I will never consent to surrender the rights of the people without such necessity into the hands of such ministers as the noble Lord, who would abuse the power intrusted to them, who had already imbrued their hands in the blood of their country, who had already been guilty of the most criminal cruelties. (cries of order.)

Lord Castlereagh called upon the hon. gent. to retract his expressions, or to prove his charge.

Mr. Bennett charged the ministers with criminal conduct in abusing their trust under the last suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and obtaining a bill of indemnity to cover their delinquencies.

Lord Castlereagh spoke to order. The hon. gent. had not explained or retracted the charge made against him of imbruing his hands in the blood of his country.

Mr. Bennett resumed.—He was the last man in the house to retract an expression that he had used, whether orderly or disorderly; but he meant the charge to apply to the whole ministry who acted under the former suspension bill; during whose fatal reign acts of such enormity took place in Ireland.

Lord Castlereagh was satisfied that the hon. gent. did not mean a personal charge. In his own name, however, and that of his colleagues, and on public grounds, if a charge of cruelty were brought against them, and they were described as imbruing their hands in the blood of the country, he would say it was a direct falsehood.

Mr. Bennett resumed.—When he spoke of cruelties, they were impressed deeply on his mind; for they were cruelties, perpetrated, not in remote regions, not beyond the bounds of our own country, not by a mandate to be executed at a distance, but at home, under the eye of government, in the Castle yard.

Lord Castlereagh said, if the hon. member meant to bring a direct charge against the government of Ireland, he was prepared to answer him.

Mr. Bennett avowed, that he did not mean to pursue the subject; but as the noble lord had met his charge of cruelty with a negative, he thought himself called upon to state some facts as justification of his conduct in making it.

Mr. F. Lewis should vote for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, with a full conviction that he was parting for a time with the great safeguard of our liberties; because in the balance of evils between a temporary suspension of our rights, and the endangering their ultimate security the former was least formidable.

Mr. Smith, of Cambridge, differed from those who proposed the measure under consideration.

Mr. Robinson could not account for the unanimity of the committee by the force of the evidence which had been laid before them.

Lord Althorp disliked all public meetings convoked by unknown or anonymous authority; but he was decidedly hostile to a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, under the existing circumstances.

The Lord Advocate of Scotland communicated some facts relative to that part of the kingdom to which he belonged. Publications had been recently circulated there, calculated to familiarise the popular mind with every immoral and seditious principle. Directions were given to watch very closely the conduct of those persons who were conspicuous in the seditions of 1796. The consequence was, that they were soon put in possession of information, that a regular conspiracy had been organised. It was found that an oath of the most dreadful import was used to bind together the members of this conspiracy.

"In awful presence of God, I, A. B. do voluntarily swear, that I will persevere in my endeavouring to form a brotherhood of affection amongst Britons of every description, who are considered worthy of confidence; and that I will persevere in my endeavours to obtain for all the people in Great Britain and Ireland, not disqualified by crimes or insanity, the elective franchise at the age of 21, with free and equal representation and annual parliaments; and that I will support the same to the utmost of my power, either by moral or physical strength, as the case may require; and I do further swear, that neither hopes, fears, or punishment shall induce me to inform or give evidence against any member or members, collectively or individually, for any act or expression done or made, in or out, in this or similar societies, under the punishment of death, to be inflicted on me by any member or members of such society. So help me God, and keep me steadfast."

[The shouts at the end of this oath resounded from all parts of the house, but were louder from the opposition benches; but it seemed that the latter were shouts of derision rather than of sympathy.]

Many hundred persons were bound together by this oath, both in Glasgow and its vicinity. Soon afterwards information was obtained, that a meeting had been held in which a motion was made for the purpose of modifying the oath, and of leaving out its most offensive terms; but such was the malignant disposition of that assembly, such its determination to have nothing to do with persons who would flinch from their horrid test, that the proposition of amendment was unanimously rejected. The result was, that at the next meeting several persons were apprehended while sitting in full conclave. Though these were all the persons who had been taken up, yet there were others in a different sphere of life who ought to have been apprehended, and who would have been taken up, provided the evidence against them had been more satisfactory. This conspiracy was not confined to Glasgow; its ramifications extended through various parts of the Kingdom; and so wide had the mischief spread, that he was in his consci-

ence convinced that nothing but the passing of this bill could prevent the effusion of the blood of our fellow-citizens; for a riot once commenced, who could say where it would end? He deeply regretted the great misfortune that such a measure should be necessary; but he was persuaded that the very safety and existence of the constitution was concerned, and that the constitution could not be preserved unless on this occasion one of its best and strongest bulwarks was suspended. (Cries of hear from the Ministers, vehemently repeated from the Opposition.)

Lord Milton retained his opinion as to the nefariousness of certain designing persons in the country, nor did he want the assertion of the learned lord to convince him of the dangerous nature of the proceedings of the disaffected. He could not but think, however, that too much importance was attached to the wild notions of these visionaries. History would show that neither in this or other countries was the Spencean plan without a parallel. Doctrines as absurd, and equally assuming religion as their basis, had been frequently propagated. Germany had its Anabaptists—men who contemplated schemes of visionary reform with a bible in one hand and a battle-axe in the other; and yet what became of them? They were let alone, and their opinions died away of themselves. Our own country presented instances of enthusiasts not dissimilar. There was the insurrection of Wat Tyler, which though it had not reached for its basis, yet had its origin in some scheme of reform, of a nature not very different from that of modern times. He should give his vote against the bill, for to do otherwise would, he thought, be voting against his country. I feel (said the noble lord) great pain in giving this vote, though I cannot express the cause of it. The noble lord sat down apparently much affected. He was supposed in the last sentence to allude to a difference of opinion between himself and his father Lord Fitzwilliam.

Mr. Wynn expressed his regret that Parliament had not been earlier assembled. Those who reflected the recent disturbances and the premeditated attack upon the Tower, would do well to recollect that not many years had passed since a stronger fortress in another country had yielded to the onset of an infuriated rabble. The suspension was necessary to stop the progress of the evil; and he believed that no man would wish to delay until it was necessary to meet the organised rebels in the field of battle. In the present times many dangers threatened that had not existed at any former period; and he conscientiously gave his support to the bill, because he felt convinced that it would prevent an actual rebellion.

Sir S. Romilly could not prevail upon himself to give a silent vote upon the most important question that had been discussed since he had a seat in parliament. The noble lord (Castlereagh) had repeatedly declared, that the most vigilant vigilance of Ministers had been exerted; but it was now quite clear, that that utmost vigilance amounted to nothing. Although Ministers had been fully apprised of the attempts upon the loyalty, the morals, and the religion of the people, not a single prosecution had been instituted. (Loud cheers.) The excuse of the Attorney-General was most extraordinary; he said, the libels laid before him were so numerous, that he could not see where prosecutions were to end. Where they were to end, he (Sir S. R.) did not pretend to decide; but it was not very difficult to determine where they ought to have begun. (Cheers from all sides.) He entreated the house to recur once more to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in 1794. At that period, Parliament had not been required to suspend the rights of the subjects of the Crown until recourse had been had to the existing laws. He much doubted, indeed, if those laws had not been too severely enforced; some notorious criminals ought to have been selected, instead of the indiscriminate and sweeping punishments awarded against every petty offender. (The Attorney-General smiled.) He was surprised to observe the smile of contempt on the face of the learned gent. intended as it was to deride the censure of conduct directly opposite to that which he had thought fit to pursue. (Hear.) The learned lord, to the surprise and dismay of his friends, had produced an oath taken by many deluded inhabitants of the kingdom, with which ministers had been some time acquainted. Were they not aware that the most severe punishment known to the law might be inflicted upon individuals subscribing that oath? Did they not know that it was felony without benefit of clergy, unless the person taking the oath within 14 days afterwards abandoned his associates, and betrayed their purposes? As to the question, whether this suspension were adapted to the existing evils, the only individual who had contended that it was so, was the hon. member who spoke last; he contended that as sufficient evidence could not be procured to convict, it was therefore proper to give Ministers unlimited power to imprison. As the delinquent could not be brought to trial, he was to be punished without it.—He (Sir S. R.) was not fond of making personal allusions, because the noble lord had shewn a remarkable soreness upon some points; but he could not help just observing, that there was a period even of the noble lord's life, when he might have had the misfortune to fall under his own denunciations, and to have been included in a list of a committee of safety. The liberality of the noble lord's opinions at one time, and the pledges of championship in the cause of Parliamentary Reform, given by him at an early period of his political life before he had entered into office, or had been planted in any of the hot-beds or nurseries for young statesmen, might have rendered even him responsible in the eyes of God and man for the consequences of disaffection and rebellion. (Loud continued cheers and laughter.) It was now for the first time laid down, that under any circumstances of alarm the rights of Englishmen were to be dispensed with. Was there no danger in this suspension, when the standing army was so overgrown, and when already Government possessed more influence than had ever before been enjoyed? Was there no danger in public opinion, and that even to Ministers themselves? Were they well assured that this measure would

have, in truth, the effect of strengthening their weak hands? Would not people see through the artifice of those who under pretence of public security, were only endeavouring to secure themselves? (Hear.) In every point of view, he thought the suspension objectionable: the dangers might be great, but the existing laws had not yet been tried, they would be found sufficient for every purpose of national protection.

The Solicitor-General considered that the evil now proposed must be resorted to, in order to prevent a greater evil. One of the evils of free constitution was this—that we had no means of preventing crimes, but only of punishing them when they were committed. Prosecutions had now been instituted; and many persons would have been prosecuted before, if the necessary evidence could have been furnished to the Crown.

Lord J. Russell could not give his vote on this occasion without protesting against what he thought would be the most dangerous precedent that ever passed that House.

Mr. Courtenay thought it a most mischievous doctrine, to say that this measure was calculated for the benefit of the Crown, and not for the benefit of the country. He considered the evidence sufficient to support the measure, and should therefore give it his support.

Sir F. Burdett was inclined to agree with the learned gentleman who had recently spoken, that the measure was not brought forward for the purpose of strengthening the Crown, but for the benefit of Ministers, who find the trade of profitable expenditure in danger of being lost. They had no real apprehension from the disciples of Mr. Spence, a poor visionary, who died twenty years ago. But what both that house and the country had the greatest reason to dread was, not the Spencean but the ex Spencean system; that system, the profligacy and profusion of which had entailed unheard-of burdens on the people, and which had created a debt, the very interest of which equalled, he believed, the whole rental of the kingdom. There were societies and clubs in different parts of the country. He knew there were, and he hoped there always would be, if the noble lord thought that his measures would silence the complaints of the people, he would find himself grievously disappointed. He might erect his gibbets even in Palaceyard, that would not prevent the public voice from being heard; and still his measures would be discussed, for it was not in the power of all the gagging bills he could invent, to prevent the people of this country from speaking their minds. Could the noble lord shut up all the population in prisons? To do so, he will have many to build; for those now existing have been long since filled by the distresses of the times. The Report was not brought out, until after the plot as it was called, had exploded in Spaffields. The pikes had been commissioned by a police officer; and the alarming handbill he doubted not came from the same quarter. It was of the same sort of manufacture as another Bill which had been exhibited in the city, under the title of "Spaffields Row, Go it my boys," and the origin of which was well known. There was no conspiracy but that of ministers to keep their places and avoid reform. If the bill went into the committee, he should propose some clauses to moderate the tyranny of its operation. It was proper that persons apprehended under such a law, should suffer nothing more than might be necessary to their safe detention. Every other degree of suffering was cruel and unjust.

Lord Castlereagh was certain, that if the country had listened to the theories of the hon. baronet, he (Lord C.) instead of being there to receive correction from the chair, should long since have stood prostrate (a laugh) with the rest of the constitution. If ministers were not armed with the measure they required, they would never be able to protect the country against disastrous and bloody catastrophes.

Mr. Ponsonby believed the material part to be true, but was perfectly persuaded that the remedy proposed was improper; he asserted that the present conspiracy was not the result of natural wickedness, but of distress and want of employment. He would never deliver the people to the mercy of government nor allow the meanest man in England to be incarcerated, there to remain at the pleasure of Ministers.

Lord Cochrane had made up his mind as to the course Ministers were running, which would bring the country to ruin. He was of opinion, that the establishment of the opposition in power was the only means of giving a chance of escaping degradation and ruin.

The question was then called for, & the house divided,
Ayes 273
Noes 98
Majority 175

Thursday, Feb. 27.
HAMPDEN CLUBS.

Lord Cochrane presented a petition from George Edmonds, Chairman of the Birmingham Hampden Club. The petitioner denied the assertions contained in the Report of the Secret Committee, and offered to convince the House before the bar, that the assertions were made on ex-parte evidence, and not founded on fact.

SUSPENSION OF THE HABEAS CORPUS.

Mr. Bennett presented a petition put into his hands in the lobby of the house. The petition of Thomas Evans, of Newcastle-street, Strand, stated, that he was librarian of the Spencean Society; that in 1793, during the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, he was imprisoned three years, in different gaols, debarred all intercourse with his family, and denied books or writing materials of every description; that he was shut up the whole time in a solitary cell; that he had been again arrested, but denied his being guilty of any of the crimes laid to his charge; that the society of which he was librarian had never in any way had any communication with any body of men on the subject of Parliamentary Reform. The prayer of the petition was, that the House would not suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, because if it did, he might again be placed in the same situation as before, without any hope of redress. The petition was read, and ordered on the table.

Lord Castlereagh had left the House through increasing indisposition. (Hear.)

Sir F. Burdett hoped this would be an additional ground for allowing a little longer time. He had haste, under the apprehension that it might come too late. It prayed against a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and considered the present law sufficient.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved, that the Speaker leave the chair.

Mr. Courtenay, after having given this question his best attention, found himself compelled to support the bill, as tending to secure the liberties and promote the interests of the country.

Mr. Curwen felt it his duty, though his opposition was hopeless, to make his opinion to the house and the country. He alluded to the speech of the learned Lord Advocate of Scotland, who, by his own statement, had clearly shown that by means of the laws as they stood, he had been enabled to arrest a number of conspirators or agitators of the disaffected. He pointed out the effects of which were to place every man who dared to oppose the plans of Ministers in the dangerous situation of a person suspected of hostility to the Government and constitution of the country.

(Hear.) He particularly well remembered one instance of a hundred gentlemen of respectability, in the north of England, who met together on the 4th of Nov. to celebrate the revolution; a spy of Mr. Reeves's was sent down there, and every word that was uttered by the gentlemen present, from affection to the revolution which placed the present Royal Family upon the throne, was noticed. What then happened? Why, that the spy reported to his employer that there was a great deal of disaffection and treason. [Hear.] Mr. Reeves wrote to an officer who had been present; and whose proper and manly reply to Mr. Reeves was, that if any thing disloyal or disaffected had occurred, he should not have required Mr. Reeves's inquiries or advice to know what he ought to do. Supposing a letter of this description put into the green-bag, totally contrary to truth; full of misrepresentations and calumnies, for expressions used in warm affection for that great event which alone gave to the reigning family their title to the throne of these realms—a title of which he hoped and trusted they would always remember the true foundation; but of which, if they abandoned the throne, they could hope for them only the fate of those whom they succeeded. (Hear.) Was not the country right, then, without authorities they had in favour of their opinion, to say that there did exist an influence within those walls which could not unite the house and the people together as they ought to be? It was impossible to have that union in such circumstances. What was to be expected from a Parliament under undue influence? What put an end to the expensive American war? Was it merely the wisdom, patriotism, and virtue of the house? No, it was the sense of the people. What was it that prevented a troublesome and ridiculous war with Russia? Was it the Parliament merely? No; it was the strong expression of the people's feelings. What was it then that could alone explode corruption, and do away places and pensions given, not even for services, but for worse than no services at all? The first suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was to set Mr. Pitt out of the difficulties that attended him in the question of reform. So now the object was to make use of circumstances to avoid reform, and sanction the establishment of an army too great for the country to hold or to pay; and to blind the nation as to its real state. He should vainly hope to stop this measure; but he would say, that if dangers did exist, it was well calculated to distrust and to banish confidence in the people. (Hear.) It might, he admitted, be necessary, after all, to the Ministers, if they were to proceed upon their system, if they were to make their stand as it had been called, and to refuse to knock off another useless place, after dismissing so many brave men who had fought our battles all over the world. (Hear.) No doubt the dismissal of many of these brave men was painful to Ministers themselves; but what might these men say? They might say, why not keep 2 or 600 of them, rather than keep two useless Lords of the Admiralty, whose business could be transacted by autocrats? (Hear.) The people were not to be blamed for withdrawing their confidence from Parliament; he should have done the same himself.

Mr. B. Bathurst said, indulgence produced only evil, and increased audacity. One of the doctrines, now so popular and so dangerous, held by the Spenceans, was then endeavoured to be propagated, and was connected with the reformers. The house formerly had both passed the Suspension Act on a Report of their Committee, and when the act expired, had justified all that was done under it, by granting a bill of indemnity.

Mr. Lockhart did not wish to follow the hon. gentleman (Mr. Curwen) into the details of his speech; but he declared that the atrocious projects disclosed in the Report of the Secret Committee induced him most cordially to give his support to the Suspension Bill now before the House, which was the only means of preventing the realization of these projects. The Report stated, that endeavours were made to undermine the principles of morality and religion. Now, if the Suspension Bill would work a temporary change in the constitution, surely this was trifling compared with the change that would be effected in the condition of society by erasing from the minds of the people all sentiments of honesty, and feelings of piety. Attempts were made by artful men to drive the people to desperation, and to inspire them with an aversion to those who were disposed to alleviate their sufferings. The prayer, "lead us not into temptation," which should always be repeated, was forgotten or despised, and the lower classes were taught to look up to the plunder, and not the charity, of the rich, as the means of relief.

Mr. Marryat was of opinion, that if the dangers set forth by the hon. and learned gentleman (Mr. Lockhart) really existed, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was not the means of arresting their progress. The people were more alarmed by the interference of Parliament than before. This measure would afford food for discontent, and thus aid the enemy it was intended to extinguish. Government and Parliament had already sunk in the opinion of the people, and the passing of such an unnecessary and arbitrary act would increase their distrust, and alienate further their affections.

The Speaker then left the chair, and the House went into a Committee. The bill was committed and reported, and ordered to be read a third time to-morrow.

The Champion.—March 3.

TUESDAY, MARCH 4.—TWO, O'CLOCK.

In the House of Lords last night, the Commons Amendments to the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act, were taken into consideration, and after some debate were agreed to. The Bill is this day to receive the Royal Assent. There was a question asked by Lord Holland the answer to which from the Chancellor—if the Chancellor's opinion be afterwards sanctioned by practice—may be beneficial to the persons subjected to confinement: they are not, it appears, to be denied the use of pen, ink, and paper, for

the purpose of stating their grievances to the Prince Regent or Houses of Parliament.

There has been a disturbance among the coal-miners of Bolton, in Somersetshire; the principal cause, however, was dissatisfaction of their wages, and the want of adequate support for their families. The prompt attention of the Magistrates, and the assistance of the Somersetshire Yeomanry, succeeded in speedily dispersing the rioters; some of the leaders of whom were seized and committed to Rochester goal. What again does this prove but the adequacy of the existing laws for the suppression of all commotions? If more force were employed, could not those useful corps the Yeomanry and Volunteers be infinitely increased? The employment cannot be called draconian; the people, they would form the natural restraining arm of Government—because to the coercion of military force they add the countenance of free will, and the conviction of right; which could not but have a great moral as well as physical effect on the tumultuous. With due precautions therefore this force, if necessary, may be resorted to in an increased degree, and we are glad to hear it is intended to be so;—not that it would be safe for either the Government or people to trust arms for too long a period, or in too great numbers, the heads of any portion of subjects—but as a temporary measure it will prove both safe and efficacious. There have also been some riots for want of provision, but of no consequence, at Athlone and Tullamore, in Ireland.

Paris Papers to the 1st inst. arrived yesterday, but their contents are altogether unimportant. The Chamber of Deputies has not yet gone through the Budget. The reduction of the Army of Occupation has been celebrated with fetes and rejoicings in several cities of France. The French Funds are 61½.

A letter from Spain speaks of an insurrection in Valencia; and which is a corroborative proof of the fact—contains the Proclamation of the Captain-general of the province on the occasion.

New York and Boston Papers to the 1st February have reached us. The Bill to prevent citizens of the United States from selling vessels of war to the citizens or subjects of any foreign Power, or more properly speaking, for maintaining the neutrality of the nation by prohibiting the fitting out or sale of armed vessels to cruise against friendly Powers, has been warmly opposed in Congress. The justice of the principles and soundness of the policy in which it originates have, however, secured to it a decided majority, and no doubt was entertained of its passing.

Projects are suggested in these papers for the formation of canals to connect Lake Erie with the Hudson river, and Lake Michigan with the Mississippi.

An Order in Council allows the importation of all goods (except foreign cotton, iron, steel, or wool) into the island of Mauritius; foreign goods are to pay an *ad valorem* duty of two per cent. above British. The object of this order is to relieve the distress and augment the trade of the island, which has suffered so severely from the fire.

From some further Army Estimates just printed, it appears, that the expense of the army in France for one year is 1,039,603*l.* 15*s.*

A paper relative to Extents, which was moved for by Mr. W. Smith, has been printed. It appears from this document, that in the last year 232 extents in chief were issued; and no less than 222 extents in aid.

The Ordnance Estimates are printed. The amount necessary for the service of Great Britain, including the Colonies, is stated to be 800,011*l.* 9*d.*; but it is presumed, that the sale of horses, and of old stores, will produce 53,000*l.* and thereby reduce the amount to 747,011*l.* 9*d.* The amount for Ireland is 144,925*l.* 18*s.* 11*d.* The grand total, including what are called expenses of reduction, is 941,966*l.* 19*s.* 8*d.*

The produce of the Customs for the month ending the 5th ult. exceeded that of the corresponding month of last year by 6,884*l.*; but falls short of the produce of the same period in 1815, by no less than 60,575*l.*

All the Exchequer Bills sent by Mr. Vansittart to the bank of England, at the reduced interest of 2½*d.* are said to have been issued to the public.

LONDON.

SATURDAY, MARCH 1.—Two o'clock. The Habeas Corpus Suspension Bill passed the House of Commons last night, after a debate of some length, and, it is understood, will, in the course of this day, receive the Royal Assent by Commission.

The only specific fact which has been made public in addition to and confirmation of the statements in the Report, is that brought before Parliament by the Lord Advocate of Scotland: and certainly it is a fact of a most striking and lamentable nature. We shrink back with pain, when we hear that hundreds of persons in one of our large manufacturing towns, and in a country generally distinguished for orderly, moral, and religious habits, have bound themselves to each other by an oath involving the meditated guilt of rebellion and murder; putting their own lives into the hands of their brother conspirators, and assuming to themselves a right of punishing obedience to the laws of the land with death! These are black and dreadful features in a treason which, we trust, is effectually arrested in its course. We lament, deeply lament, such crimes. Independent of their enormity, they strengthen but too much the arguments of those who think the more rigorous measures of Government are warranted by circumstances; and indeed the Ministers are supported in their views by a great majority of both Houses of Parliament. We nevertheless continue to behold the situation of affairs with a bolder aspect.

A Mail from Flanders arrived last night.—The reported marriage of the Duke of Kent is officially contradicted.

The sacrifice made by Ministers of one-tenth of their income will produce 90,000*l.*; which is in addition to the 50,000*l.* from the Prince Regent.—Such generosity has before been practised on the Throne. Queen Anne gave up 100,000*l.* a year during the war; and George II. gave up at once the whole Droits accruing during the seven years war, amounting to 900,000*l.*

The labours of the late Captain Tuckey are not lost. His journals have been received complete, to the farthest point to which he proceeded in the interior of southern Africa. The journals of the naturalist, botanist, &c. who accompanied the expedition, are also received by the Admiralty, and the whole are undergoing a revision, for the purpose of being presented to the public.

A considerable change will, it is said, take place in the Police Offices, in a few days, in consequence of an order from the Secretary of State, Lord Sidmouth, that the investigations are to be before the Police Magistrate only in cases of felony, and that no Assistant Parochial Magistrates are to interfere in any other cases than assaults, &c.

A sheep was lately stolen from the grounds of the Royal Society in Dublin. The thieves were found in the act of carrying it away in a sedan chair.

While strangers were excluded at the division last Tuesday night, upon rejecting the LYMINGTON PETITION, a circumstance occurred which merits peculiar attention.—Three Gentlemen were found by the Tellers in the passage behind the Speaker's chair, and were, according to invariable practice in such cases, conducted into the House to vote. The Speaker repeated the question to them, and desired them to say, in succession, on which side they voted. Mr. S. Thornton, M. P. for Surrey, was the first to whom the question was put. He answered instantly, without any hesitation, that he voted for rejecting the Petition. A suspicion having arisen that he had not heard the Petition read (the ground of rejection being the language in which it was couched), the Speaker was requested to ask him whether or not he had heard it? Mr. Thornton said, that he was an old Member of Parliament, & did not see what right any one had to ask him such a question; but Mr. Speaker declared it must be answered, and put it to him accordingly.—Whereupon Mr. Thornton said, that he had not heard the Petition read; it was then read to him, and he persisted in his vote for rejecting it; but he had at once given the same vote without hearing one syllable of its contents!—To this curious anecdote, may be added, that when the question on the receipt of the Petition was put by the Speaker to the Members seated in the House, who had heard it read, he declared the *Yeas* to carry it; but, on the division, a number of Members who were in adjacent rooms hurried into the House, and without having heard the Petition read, voted with the *Noes*.

On Monday last, between four and five thousand persons assembled on Portsdown Hill, in consequence of Mr. Cobbett's public advertisement, to agree to a Petition for a Reform in the Commons House of Parliament, &c. Mr. Cobbett and Lord Cochrane arrived there at about noon; and an eligible spot being chosen from which they could address the Meeting, soon afterwards two of Mr. Cobbett's waggons arrived, one fitted up for the speakers, the other with tables for the convenience of persons to sign. Mr. Goldsmith (a farmer) being called by Mr. Cobbett to fill the chair, Mr. C. then entered on the subject of the day, and dwelt for a considerable time upon the necessity of Reform, Universal Suffrage, Annual Elections, the Extravagant Civil List, Expenditure of the Army, &c. and concluded by reading a large Petition, embracing these topics. Mr. Hinxman, (a farmer) seconded the motion that the same be adopted as the Petition of that Meeting. Lord Cochrane next addressed the expectators at considerable length, and concluded by assuring the Meeting, he would lose no time in presenting the Petition to the House. The thanks of the Meeting were voted to Lord Cochrane and the Chairman, and the assemblage (which was composed principally of persons from the country and of the lowest orders of society) then dispersed in the most quiet and commendable manner. Lord C. presented the Petition to the House on Tuesday evening. His Lordship, as will be seen by a reference to the Parliamentary proceedings, told the House the Meeting was *numerously and respectfully* attended.—20,000 persons!—which would have been increased to 100,000 had not the *great guns on the batteries been loaded*, and Portsdown placed in a military attitude, as though it were *besieged*!—Such a distorted mode of representation can do no good to any cause.

Feb. 17.

ARRESTS BY ORDER OF GOVERNMENT.

On Saturday discoveries were made to induce Ministers to cause the apprehension of several persons on charges of political offences; and Pearkes, Taunton, Lavender, Adkins, Bishop and Vicary, the Bow-street Officers, Perry the constable, and a number of others, were to hold themselves in readiness. It was very prudently determined to apprehend them all at the same time, in order to avoid alarm. On Saturday night the Officers were all mustered, and departed under the direction of Mr. Stafford, the chief clerk belonging to the office, Mr. Brown, and Mr. Ures, the King's Messengers: they went in pursuit of all the persons charged; but

not being able to find them all at home, after waiting till a late hour, they gave up their pursuit. The principal man wanting was old Watson, and he being said to be living with Preston, in an obscure court in the neighbourhood of Gough-square, Lavender and another officer were observed waiting on the outside of the house: and some friend of Preston's went and informed him of the circumstance, but Preston treated it with his usual boldness of contempt, saying he did not care if there were 60 constables, for he should be the better protected.

Sunday morning by seven o'clock the messengers and officers resumed their exertions to apprehend the men against whom they had warrants. They gained admittance before eight o'clock into the house where Preston lodged, and found him and old Watson in bed. Watson was not in the same bed with his companion Preston, but in a bed on the floor in the same wretched apartment, in the most abject and deplorable state of poverty, having very little more than a ragged quilt to cover them; they were very reluctant to get up, and old Watson demanded by what authority they were taken, denying any power except it was authorized by the Lord Mayor, as he was then in the City of London, and at the same time regretted that he had gone to lodge with Preston, which was the cause of his being brought a second time into trouble. The King's Messenger who headed this party shewed him his badge, with the royal arms, denoting his office, and a warrant from Viscount Sidmouth, his Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department. Old Watson and Preston then being satisfied as to the authority, surrendered very quietly, and were conveyed to Bow-street Office. Mr. Evans and his son, of Newcastle-street, in the Strand, were apprehended by another party about the same time; they also made considerable objections as to the authority, but were at length satisfied. Mrs. Evans observed it was only what she expected. This woman it appears, and her husband, were taken into custody twenty years ago by Mr. Shaw, the King's Messenger, on a charge of political offences; the son was then only a year and a half old. He is described to be a young man of some abilities.

Watson and Preston exonerate the Evans' from any connexion with them, though it is understood that their political doctrines are perfectly congenial. The acquaintance between the elder Evans and the elder Watson began, it seems, about three years ago, on the occasion of both these political philosophers happening to sit on a Coroner's Jury together. Evans then gave him a pamphlet containing his "Improved and cheap method of managing Government." Watson delighted with this sympathy of sentiment, received the book with rapture, and the worthies have been sworn friends from that day. He was, it is said, one of the Secretaries of the Corresponding Society, and had the honour to be an intimate associate of O'Quigley, who was convicted of high treason, and of Binns, who was as great a man formerly as Hunt is now. It was suspected that young Watson was concealed in the family of Evans, or at least that they knew where he was. Mrs. Evans, however, protests that she has not seen young Watson for the last two years. Among the books taken from the house of Evans was a work just published, called "An Address of the Society of Spencean Philanthropists to all Mankind, on the means of promoting Liberty and Happiness." Evans informed the Officers, he would not quit his house without force compelled him so to do, upon which the Officers instantly collared him. "Now (said Evans) you have used force, I will go peaceably. Upon the Officers tying up the bag, young Evans observed, "Let us seal our own papers with our own seal." One of the Officers replied, "What do you do that for?" Old Evans then said to the Officers, "Because inflammatory papers may be put into the bag to make it treason, for I know you gentlemen of old. It is an illegal document, I am certain; I have done nothing that I am ashamed of, or to be used thus!" The bag was then sealed with young Evan's seal, and they were both conveyed to prison.

There were also brought to the Bow-street office, who, were apprehended about the same time, two men, named Keene, from a court in Old Cavenish-street; and a man named Castles, from Newport-market. All their papers were seized and sealed up, and in other respects properly secured. They were all refreshed with breakfast, &c.

It being known at the Secretary of State's Office, a meeting of the Cabinet Ministers was immediately summoned, and they met at one o'clock at the office for the Home Department. The Attorney and Solicitor General, Sir N. Conant, Mr. Litchfield, the Solicitor to the Treasury, together with the Under Secretaries of State, were in attendance. The Lord Mayor attended at the office at half past three o'clock.

The prisoners were examined separately. Preston was examined first. They were kept in separate rooms, with officers to take care of them.

The Cabinet Ministers present were, the Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Harrowby, the Earl of Westmoreland, the Earl of Liverpool, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Viscount Sidmouth, Viscount Castlereagh, Earl Bathurst, Earl Mulgrave, Viscount Melville, Mr. Canning, and Mr. B. Bathurst. They continued their investigations till half past five o'clock. The Attorney and Solicitor General and the other official

gentlemen were occupied till half past six. At seven o'clock the prisoners were conveyed in coaches to different places of confinement, guarded inside and out by police officers.

Feb. 11.

COMMON HALL.

Yesterday a Meeting of the Livery was held in the Common-hall, for the purpose of petitioning Parliament against the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. The Lord Mayor entered the Court at one o'clock, attended by several Aldermen. The requisition being read,

Mr. Favel came forward for the purpose of moving a series of Resolutions. Never had the Livery been assembled at so alarming and important a crisis as the present, never in fact, was the country placed in so dreadful and portentous a situation. They had now to contend for the preservation of their liberty against an attempt to deprive them of it. Mr. Sheridan had justly observed, that to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act was to suspend the Constitution. Having argued at some length the sufficiency of the present laws to meet the exigencies of the times, he concluded amidst general applause by moving his Resolutions, which were in substance as follows:

Resolved unanimously, That this Common Hall has viewed with the deepest concern the attempts of his Majesty's Ministers to precipitate through Parliament an Act for suspending the great Charter of personal security, the Habeas Corpus Act, and also other Acts restricting the freedom of the subject, and threatening dangerous innovations on the established laws of the realm.

That this Hall is deeply afflicted to discover that, instead of adopting measures to redress the grievances, and remove the distresses of a suffering and loyal People, his Majesty's Ministers have proposed a system of coercive restrictions, calculated to create distrust through the nation, and increase the despondency by which it is already overwhelmed.

That the grounds and necessity of such attacks upon the liberties of the People appear to be founded on ex-parte evidence, selected by Ministers, several of whom were themselves upon the Secret Committees and which has been in several instances offered to be contradicted at the bar of both Houses of Parliament.

That we feel the more aggrieved by these attacks upon our constitutional rights, because the reports of the said Secret Committees appear to confound the proceedings of the City of London, and other numerous Bodies, with some obscure political theorists, with whom they have no connexion or concern.

That this Common Hall cannot but believe that his Majesty's Ministers have had recourse to these oppressive measures for the purpose of protecting the abuse of which we have so often complained, and of stifling the just complaints of the people, affording thereby additional grounds for suspicion of a settled design in the present Ministers to trample upon the liberties of the people, and to establish a despotic Government, by means of an overwhelming influence and enormous military establishments.

That if it were proved, by unequivocal evidence, that imminent danger existed, to guard against which the existing laws were insufficient, this Hall would readily concur in the enactment of such laws as might be deemed necessary; but they should be restricted in their operation to criminal acts, and to criminal parties, and not place the liberties of the innocent and the people at the disposal of the arbitrary will or caprice of the Ministers of the Crown.

That the British Constitution is not so frail an edifice, as to require, upon every effluence of the public mind, that the chief barrier of public liberty should be suspended or relaxed.

That every effort should be made to induce the Prince Regent to dismiss from his Councils Ministers whose so evidently unworthy of the Sovereign or the people.

That this Common Hall do present Petitions to both Houses of Parliament, praying that they will be pleased to reject any proposition for suspending the Habeas Corpus Act; and that they will not pass any other laws restricting the rights of the subject, without allowing the people to ascertain the truth of the alleged grounds, upon which such measures have been proposed.

Mr. Waitman in coming forward to second the Resolutions, said, never had there been a period more marked by public calamity than the present, never was there one where so little attention was paid to the voice of the people [hear, hear.] The worthy Baronet Sir W. Curtis, whom he (Mr. Waitman) had almost said represented the City, had said he was convinced the measure was necessary. But they knew it was the custom of that worthy Alderman always to vote before he heard, and he had his mind fully made up before this tremendous green bag was opened [cheers]. But so futile were the grounds on which that Report was founded, that it was offered to be contradicted on oath at the bar of the House, but Ministers would not bear evidence.

The most tremendous thing which appeared, was the oath produced by the Lord Advocate of Scotland. After, however, the evidence which had been offered in direct contradiction to the other parts of the Report, he did not believe that this oath had any foundation in reality. [Cheers.] He was old enough to remember how similar tricks were made use of by Mr. Pitt in the year 1795, how he sent his spies into every corner. He remembered a meeting in a Tavern at that time, which among others was attended by an alarmist. Some individuals thought it right to *roast* that individual, and accordingly in a hoax told him that things were now in a bad way, for a tailor had received orders to make 40,000 green jackets with yellow buttons on them, and the tree of liberty engraved on these buttons. Thus there was a green coat plot then, as there was a green bag plot now [loud cheers]. The poor man believed the story, and actually told in a public meeting of the Ward of Farringdon Without, "O, Sirs," said he, "we're in a dreadful mess, for there's a Tailor got orders to make forty thousand green jackets, with yellow buttons, and the Tree of Liberty on them; some morning may be our last." [Loud laughter.] Ludicrous as this seemed, it was nevertheless true. The placard which had been taken notice of by the Lord Mayor, respecting the Spa-fields Row, and which had on it—"Go it, my boys!"—had in no small degree affected the worthy Alderman (Sir W. Curtis) behind him. He was one of the Secret Committee, and coming into the Mansion House, he was so dreadfully alarmed, that he actually begged the Lord Mayor would furnish him with a copy of it, with which he went off to the Committee [loud cheers.]

Thrice he grew pale, And thrice the burning blush went o'er his cheek." So agitated was his feelings, that he could only mutter out with difficulty, "Horrible, horrible! O, Sirs, it's dreadful, horrible!" [Loud laughter.] He could not describe in sufficient terms the agitation of the worthy Baronet; his head was heaving most violently, his limbs trembling, and every hair of his head standing erect, like the quills of a fretted porcupine [loud laughter.] But when he afterwards heard it was published by a Loyalist, by one of the confidence of Government, he did not say one word. He was aware that the friends of Reform had been most grossly calumniated, because they spoke the truth; and was it not impossible not to speak it when they saw such an individual as George Canning with a pension of 14,000*l.*

a year, sent, under pretence of a sick child, merely out of the way of his rival, Lord Castlereagh? When he saw the manner in which plunderers lived on the public property; when he saw the audacity with which they perished in plundering, he felt indignant, and was ashamed he was an Englishman [Loud and long applause]. It had been much better for Ministers, instead of giving the present preamble to the Bill they were now hurrying through the House, to have given it such a one as this—“Whereas the people, by complaining of pensions, sinecures, and other abuses, have become of late very troublesome to Ministers, and showing an ignorant impatience and clamour, it is expedient, and be it, &c.” Then for once they would have spoken the truth; for this, and this only, was the real cause of their proposed suspension. He was confident there were 99 out of 100 in England who would say so. Thus when the people asked for bread, they received a stone, thus when they complained of abuses, they were grossly insulted. [Cheers.] What was the great object of Reform? It was to repair those dilapidations in the British Constitution which the rude hand of corruption had made in it. On a Report, founded on fallacious documents, Englishmen were now in danger of being immured in dungeons, at the arbitrary will of Ministers, whose acts in Ireland were too deeply recorded in every heart to be soon forgotten. [Loud cheers.] The only measure left was for the country to unite in imploring his Royal Highness to dismiss from his councils those men whose oppressive administration had entailed calamities of so unparalleled a nature upon their unhappy country.

The Resolutions were then unanimously adopted. Mr. Fowell moved that the petition be not held in his hand, after being read, be adopted.

Mr. Withman seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Mr. Fowell moved for a shorter time than usual. Mr. Hinchins and Sir W. Curtis said a few words on the object of the Meeting, the former supporting the measure, the latter regretting he was obliged to differ from his constituents.

On thanks being voted to the Lord Mayor, his Lordship shortly addressed the Meeting. He was happy to see their unanimity, and could only lament the painful necessity which had called for their meeting together. He was astonished no evidence was called in support of the Report laid before Parliament, convinced, as he was from personal knowledge, that it was founded on, to say the least, very doubtful authority. The principal papers in the green bag had, he believed, been sent by him, (for he could assure them it was impossible to conceive the immense number of papers which had been sent to him,) many of them he knew well to be written in a feigned hand, and many of them came, he was bold to say, from persons who wished the passing of this unhappy measure. He could have wished to have been examined, as he would thus have had an opportunity of showing, as he could do, the fallacy of much of that Report. The Tower never was summoned to surrender, nor had the Magistrates ever on the 2d of December been assembled in the Exchange. He and Sir James Shaw were there alone, and he believed the shot fired at him was by an individual so intoxicated as not to know what he was doing. He detested the imputations cast on the Hampden Club, and lamented there had not been an opportunity afforded the Members of that Club of showing these imputations were unfounded as they were untrue and libellous. No man who knew the late riot could doubt the law was amply sufficient to protect the subjects without any infringement of their rights. By the assistance of a Worthy Baronet (Sir J. Shaw) he had in an inconsiderable degree shown this to be so, and he did not hesitate in saying, were an occurrence of the same kind (which God forbid!) ever to take place, he would not be afraid of 10,000 such individuals, though he should stand alone.

His Lordship was frequently interrupted in his Address by loud cheering, and retired from the hustings amidst the universal applause of the Meeting.

COMMITTEE OF SECRECY

OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF SECRECY ON PAPERS which were presented (Sealed up) to the House, by Lord Viscount CASTLEREAGH, on the 4th day of February, by command of his Royal Highness the PRINCE REGENT.

The Committee of Secrecy, to whom the several Papers, which were presented (sealed up) to the House, by Lord Viscount Castlereagh, on the 4th day of February, by command of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, were referred, and who were directed to examine the matters thereof, and report the same, as they should appear to them, to the House; have unanimously agreed to the following Report:—

It appears to your Committee, from the most attentive consideration of the several Documents referred to them, that attempts have been made, in various parts of the Country, as well as in the Metropolis, to take advantage of the distress in which the labouring and manufacturing classes of the community are at present involved, to induce them to look for immediate relief, not only in a Reform of Parliament on the plan of universal suffrage and annual election, but in a total overthrow of all existing establishments, and in a division of the landed, and extinction of the funded property of the country.

This hope and prospect of spoliation have been actively and industriously propagated by several Societies, openly existing in the Metropolis, distinguished by the name of *Spenceans*; a title which they have assumed in consequence of having revived the principles, with some variation, of a visionary writer of the name of Spence, which first appeared in a publication of his near twenty years ago.

It appears that at some of these Societies, held during the last month, the question was discussed: whether the meetings for Parliamentary Reform are calculated to mislead or enlighten the public. In the course of the Debates upon which question, it was strongly urged “that Parliamentary Reform was only an half measure; that they must look to the Land, for nothing short of that would ever avail them; that we had no Constitution, there being no book in which it could be found, nor any man that could tell what it was.” In another discussion upon the question, “Whether the practical establishment of Spence’s plan be an effectual remedy for the

present distresses,” one of the doctrines maintained was, that “the landholder was a monster to be hunted down; but that they should not suffer themselves to be amused; that there was a greater evil, namely, the fundholder; that these were the rapacious wretches, that took 15d. out of every quarter loaf.”

It further appears, that in these meetings the most blasphemous expressions and doctrines are openly and repeatedly advanced; that at the meetings are professed to be of a convivial nature, the political debates and readings are usually followed by Songs, in many of which the most inflammatory topics are introduced, some of a seditious and treasonable nature, and others under the form of profane and indecent parodies of the Liturgy and of the holy Scriptures.

These societies appear to have extended themselves; and there are traces of the existence of a Committee called *Conservative*, directing the operations of the whole. The doctrines above mentioned have been systematically and industriously disseminated amongst mechanics and Manufacturers, discharged soldiers and sailors, and labourers of all descriptions; they have been inculcated at frequent appointed meetings, and at various places, by speakers, who have made the distresses of the times topics of excitement and inflammation; and they have been circulated, with incredible activity and perseverance, in cheap and often gratuitous publications. It has been proved to the entire satisfaction of your Committee, that some members of these, acting by delegated or assumed authority, as an executive Committee of the whole, conceived the project, and endeavoured to prepare the means of raising an insurrection, so formidable from numbers, as by dint of physical strength to overpower all resistance.

The first step towards the accomplishment of this object was, by the individual exertion of the members of the Committee, to discover and foment the prevalent distresses and discontents in the Metropolis and its vicinity. Returns were made of those, who they thought were to be relied upon for daring and hazardous enterprises.

The design was by a sudden rising in the dead of the night to surprise and overpower the soldiers in the different barracks, which were to be set on fire; at the same time (plans having been arranged, and some steps taken with a view to the accomplishment of that object) to possess themselves of the artillery, to seize or destroy the bridges, and to take possession of the Tower and the Bank. In furtherance of this design, a machine was projected for clearing the streets of cavalry. A drawing of this machine, fully authenticated, and also a manuscript sketch or plans of various important parts of the Tower, found with the drawing of the machine, have been laid before your Committee.

This design was however relinquished a short time before its intended execution. It was thought more prudent previously to ascertain what force the Conspirators could actually call together, and this it was agreed could best be done by convening a public meeting, for the ostensible purpose of obtaining a redress of grievances in a legal way. The map of London was inspected, and Spaffields were selected as the most eligible spot, from their vicinity to the Bank and the Tower. Advertisements were accordingly prepared, and written placards circulated, of the most dangerous and inflammatory nature; of one of which the following is a copy:—

“HITONS TO ARMS!”

“The whole country waits the signal from London to fly to Arms! Haste, break open gunsmiths and other likely places to find Arms! Run all constables who touch a man of us; no rise of Bread; no Regent; no Castlereagh; off with their heads; no Placemen, Tithes, or Enclosures; no Taxes; no Bishops, only useless lumber! Stand true, or be Slaves for ever.”

“N. B. Five thousand of these Bills are up in the Town, and printed ones, with further particulars, will appear in due time.”

At this time, if not before, the intended insurrection assumed the symbols of the French Revolution; a Committee of Public Safety, consisting of 24, was agreed upon, including the names of several persons, extremely unlikely to lend themselves to such a cause. A tri-coloured flag and cockades, were actually prepared; the flag was openly carried and displayed at the first meeting which took place in Spa-fields on the 15th of November. No acts of violence were however encouraged on that day, though some few instances of plunder occurred after the assembly dispersed, but care was taken to adjourn the meeting to the 2d of December, by which time it was hoped that the preparations for insurrection would be fully matured. Not a moment was lost in advertising the next meeting, & great assiduity was employed in circulating the intelligence through all the great manufacturing towns in the country, by means of placards and handbills; endeavours were used to raise subscriptions; the expence hitherto incurred in forwarding the object of the Conspiracy, and in supporting such inferior members of it as had relinquished their trades and occupations in order to devote their whole time to the furtherance of the cause, having been hitherto principally defrayed by one individual of the Committee, Plans for the seduction of the Soldiers were now adopted and pursued with unremitting activity;

appeals were made to excite their sympathy, and induce them not to act against the insurgents; attempts were made to inflame their hopes by promises of rank and reward, and to alarm their jealousy by the absurd fiction of the actual landing of a considerable foreign army, for the purpose of controlling them.

The Barracks were again reconnoitred with a view to attack. The manufacture of tri-colour ribbon was encouraged, with a view of rendering it familiar to the eyes of the public.

Visits were repeated to those quarters of the town where the distress was considered as the most prevalent; and ware-houses along the river, as well as shops in other places, which were known to contain arms, combustibles, and clothing, were examined and noted down, with the view of seizing those articles on the proper occasion. Plans were also formed for seducing the sailors on the River, by offers of advancement to high rank under the new Government, and for seizing and equipping such ships as were accessible. Immediately previous to the day of meeting, arms were provided for the immediate use of some of the persons most actively engaged. This provision was deemed sufficient for the beginning of the insurrection, as they felt confident that if it should be successful for two hours, as many arms might be procured as would be necessary, from the depots and gunsmiths’ shops, which had been reconnoitred on the view.

Your Committee have further received undoubted information that a large quantity of pike heads had been ordered of one individual, and 250 actually made by him, and delivered and paid for. It was also undoubtedly intended to liberate the prisoners in the principal goals in or about the Metropolis, in the hope of their concurrence and assistance in the intended insurrection. Addresses were introduced into some of those prisons, and recommended to be communicated to others, in which the persons confined were invited, in the name of the Tri-coloured Committee, to rally round the tri-coloured standard, which would be erected on Monday, December the 2d, and to wear tri-coloured cockades themselves. It was promised that the prisoners should be liberated by force, and arms were stated to be provided for them, and they were directed to be ready to assist in overpowering the turnkeys. A wagon was hired for the business of the day, in which the flags and banner or standard, which had been previously prepared, together with some ammunition, were secretly conveyed to the place of meeting. From this wagon, before the ostensible business of the day commenced, in the other part of the field, the most inflammatory speeches were delivered, tending directly to excite insurrection, concluded by an appeal to the multitude assembled, whether they were prepared to redress their own grievances. A tri-colour cockade was then exhibited, and the tri-colour flag was displayed, and a number of persons followed it out of the field.

The direction which they took was towards that part of the town previously designed; gunsmiths’ shops were broken open, addresses and offers were made to the soldiers at the Tower to induce them to open the gates; but from the failure of the numbers expected to join the insurgents, no attempt was made to force the gates. An attack was however made upon the City Magistrates assembled in the Royal Exchange, a shot fired, and a tri-colour flag and cockade openly displayed and seized on the offender.

In reviewing the whole of the transactions of the 2d of December, your Committee are firmly persuaded, that, however improbable the success of such a plan may appear, it yet was deliberately premeditated by desperate men, who calculated, without reasonable ground, upon defection in their opposers, and upon active support from those multitudes, whose distress they had witnessed, and whom they had vainly instigated to revolt. That consequently it was not merely the sudden ebullition of the moment, or the unauthorised attempt of any unconnected individual.

Your Committee are further convinced, that notwithstanding the failure on the 2d of December, the same designs still continue to be prosecuted with sanguine hopes of success.

Your Committee having thus stated the general result of the evidence which has been laid before them, respecting the state of the metropolis, have now the less painful duty of calling the attention of the House to what has been passing during the same period in different parts of the country, a subject of equally momentous consideration. The first thing which has here forced itself upon their observation, is the widely diffused ramification of a system of Clubs, associated professedly for the purpose of Parliamentary Reform, upon the most extended principle of universal suffrage and annual Parliaments. These Clubs in general designate themselves by the same name of Hampden Clubs. On the professed object of their institution, they appear to be in communication and connection with the Club of that name in London.

It appears to be part of the system of these Clubs, to promote an extension of Clubs of the same name and nature, so widely as, if possible, to include every village in the Kingdom. The leading members are active in circulation of publications likely to promote their object. Petitions, ready prepared, have been sent down from the Metropolis to all Societies in the Country disposed to receive them. The communication between these Clubs takes place by the mission of Delegates: Delegates from the Clubs in the Country have assembled in London, and are expected to assemble again early in March. Whatever may be the real object of these Clubs in general, your Committee have no hesitation in stating, from information on which they place full reliance, that in far the greater number of them, and particularly in those which are established in the great manufacturing districts of Lancashire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, and Derbyshire, and which are composed of the lower order of Artisans, nothing short of a Revolution is the object expected and avowed.

Your Committee find from equally undoubted information, that the doctrines of the *Spencean Clubs* have been widely diffused through the country, either by the extension of similar Societies, or more frequently by the intervention of Missionaries, or Delegates, whose business it is to propagate those doctrines throughout every Society to which they have access. It is the universal practice of these Societies, to require from the members a small weekly subscription which provides a fund for the expenses of these Missionaries, and also for the purchase of seditious tracts which are read and commented on at their meetings. Some of these tracts now before your Committee, inculcate in the most artful manner, the necessity of overturning what they call “The Privileged Class,” as distinguished from the People, who are described as consisting of Labourers, Artisans, Tradesmen, and every profession useful to society. A new order is declared to be the will of the people; rebellion is justified by the assertion, that a Nation cannot be a rebel; and the religion is disavowed, as well as loyalty, by the asser-

tion, in answer to the question, “Would you live without Gods or Kings?”—“We abjure tyranny of every kind.”

It seems, indeed, to be a part of the system adopted by these Societies to prepare the minds of the people for the destruction of the present frame of society, by undermining not only their habits of duty, but regular subordination, but all the principles of morality and religion. Your Committee find, that there is scarcely any very numerous society in the parts referred to, of whose proceedings they have obtained an account, in which some of the leading speakers do not openly avow the most seditious opinions, and do not excite their hearers to be prepared for actual insurrection. Topics for discussion are selected with this view; amongst others, the question, whether the Jacobin, or the Loyalist was the best friend to the country? Even where petitioning is recommended, it is proposed to be conducted in such a manner, by an immense number of Delegates, attending in London at the same time, that every party, attached to each Petition, as might induce an effort to obtain by force whatever they demanded. A general idea seems prevalent amongst those who compose these Societies, that some fixed day, at no very great distance, is to be appointed for a general rising. They have been taught to look to the meetings in London as the signal for their operations, and have been in the habit of adjourning their own assemblies simultaneously on the same day; and it is a lamentable instance of the common interest which they feel, if not of the connection which is formed with those most implicated in the outrages committed in the Metropolis, that about Manchester and some other places, the greatest exultation was manifested previous to the meeting in Spa-fields on the 2d of December; and the falling of the Tower and the ruin of the Bank were publicly and confidently predicted. The news of the result was impatiently expected, the roads were crowded during the night with a number of persons, many of them Delegates from the different Societies in the country, waiting for the arrival of the mail coach, and the disappointment was not concealed, when it was ascertained that the riot had been quelled without much serious or extensive mischief.

It appears, that the confidence of the disaffected is such that they represent the numbers enrolled as amounting to several hundred thousand, and that their societies are daily increasing; that in their list they distinguish by particular marks those among the subscribers who are able bodied men, and ready to act when required; and they also keep a list of those who refuse to join them, in what they call a “Black Book,” and threaten vengeance against those persons when the general insurrection shall take place. In some parts of one populous county, where nearly every village has already its Hampden Club, the Members make it no secret, that they consider themselves as of no other use than as being ready to act whenever they are called upon; on their admission they are said to be listed, and receive a secret card, with the words “Be Ready, Be Steady.”

The habits and manners of these persons seem entirely changed; they already calculate upon the share of land which each is to possess, and point out the destruction of the churches as the necessary consequence of their success. It appears that preparations are in progress, in several places, for providing arms; the demand upon gunsmiths, for every species of fire-arms has been beyond all former example; the intention is professed, of having recourse to a still larger supply to those towns where arms are manufactured, and where they are to be obtained at a very low rate, from the general cheapness of labour at this time, or in case of necessity they are to be seized by force. The facility of converting implements of husbandry into offensive weapons has been suggested; and persons have been sent to observe the state of particular places, where depots of arms for the public service were supposed to have been formed.

Your Committee find that a system of secret association has been extended to the manufacturing population of Glasgow, and some other populous towns of Scotland; and although these Societies have availed themselves of the same pretext of Parliamentary Reform on the broadest basis, your Committee are firmly persuaded, from the information which has been laid before them, that their ultimate object is the overthrow by force of the existing form of Government. That the time for attempting this enterprise was to depend on the simultaneous rising of the disaffected in England; with some emissaries from whom occasional intercourse appears to have taken place, and that some provision of weapons has been made by this association.

Your Committee have now submitted to the House, what they conceive to be a fair and not exaggerated statement of the result of their investigation. They have thought themselves precluded from inserting, in an Appendix, the information from which it is drawn, by the consideration, that unless it is extremely partial and incomplete, they could not make it public without jeopardising the personal safety of many useful and respectable individuals, and in some instances without prejudicing the due administration of public justice.

On a review of the whole, it is a great satisfaction to your Committee to observe, that notwithstanding the alarming progress which has been made in the system of extending disaffection and secret societies, its success has been confined to the principal manufacturing districts, where the distress is more prevalent, and numbers more easily collected; and that even in many of these districts, privations have been borne with exemplary patience and resignation, and the attempts of the disaffected have been disappointed; that few if any of the higher orders, or even of the middle class of society, and scarcely any of the agricultural population, have lent themselves to the more violent of these projects. Great allowance must be made for those who, under the pressure of urgent distress, have been led to listen to plausible and confident Demagogues, in the expectation of immediate relief. It is to be hoped, that many of those who have engaged, to a certain extent, in the projects of the disaffected, but in whom the principles of moral and religious duty have not been extinguished or perverted by the most profane and miserable sophistry, would withdraw themselves before those projects were pushed to actual insurrection.

But, with all these allowances, your Committee cannot contemplate the activity and arts of the Leaders in this Conspiracy, and the numbers whom they have already seduced, and may seduce; the outlay by which many of them are bound together; the means suggested and prepared for the forcible attainment of their objects; the nature of the objects themselves, which are not only the overthrow of all the political institutions of the Kingdom, but also such a subversion of the rights and principles of Property, as must necessarily lead to general confusion, plunder and bloodshed; without submitting to the most serious attention of the House, the dangers which exist, and which the utmost vigilance of Government, under the existing laws, has been found inadequate to prevent.—February 19, 1817.

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